

**REMARKS**

Upon entry of the amendment, claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 11 will be all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to correct typographical errors and for purposes of further clarity and consistency. In addition, claim 9 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 10, which has been canceled. Claim 11 has been amended so that it does not depend from a canceled claim.

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates that claim 1 would be allowable if the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection is overcome, and that claims 2, 4-8 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Since the amendments to the claims will place the application in condition for allowance, entry is respectfully requested.

**I. Response to Rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph**

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second, paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

The Examiner asserts that claim 1 does not recite heating steps and that heating is required prior to cooling. Thus, the Examiner suggests the following language "continuous annealing heat treatment comprises a reheat of the steel until it reaches a temperature of between 750 and 850°C, isothermal soak followed by a first cooling operation..."

Without acquiescing the merits of the rejection, claim 1 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. In addition, claim 2 has been amended to be consistent with claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection has been overcome, and withdrawal is respectfully requested.

**II. Response to Rejection of Claims 9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claims 9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over JP 2002-12920 (JP '920).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

It is submitted that JP '920 fails to disclose a bake hardening sheet where the sheet has a composition comprising, expressed in % by weight:

$$\begin{aligned}0.03 &\leq C \leq 0.06 \\0.50 &\leq Mn \leq 1.10 \\0.08 &\leq Si \leq 0.20 \\0.015 &\leq Al \leq 0.070 \\N &\leq 0.007 \\Ni &\leq 0.040 \\Cu &\leq 0.040 \\P &\leq 0.035 \\S &\leq 0.015 \\Mo &\leq 0.010 \\Ti &\leq 0.005\end{aligned}$$

it being understood that the steel also contains boron in an amount such that:

$$0.64 \leq \frac{B}{N} \leq 1.60$$

the balance of the composition consisting of iron and impurities and has a yield strength of between 260 and 360 MPa, a tensile strength of between 320 and 460 MPa, a BH2 value of greater than 60 MPa and a yield plateau of less than or equal to 0.2%. Accordingly, JP '920 fails to render obvious the present invention according to claim 9 and the claims depending therefrom.

In view of the above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

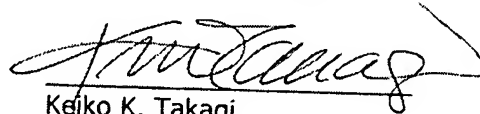
**III. Conclusion**

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-2, 4-9 and 11 is respectfully requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Keiko K. Takagi  
Registration No. 47,121

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC  
Telephone: (202) 293-7060  
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: January 27, 2009